

Gil GREEN

Sen. Douglas Didn't Mean To, But He Accurately Posed the Issue for '50

THE OTHER DAY, Paul Douglas told the truth. Yes, the very same Paul Douglas who is the junior U.S. Senator from Illinois and the darling of the so-called American for Democratic Action.

Douglas recently appeared as the honored guest of the Union League Club in Chicago. The multi-millionaire Republicans who run the club went out of their way to make him feel at home. He was introduced as "a statesman who is trying to help our pocketbooks," and what greater homage than this can the Union League Club pay to any man?

He told the assembled who's-who of LaSalle Street that he agreed with their clamor for lower taxes and for economy in government.

Then Douglas told his Republican friends that they were wrong in blaming the so-called "welfare state" for higher taxes and a mounting federal deficit.



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"It is not the welfare state but the warfare state that keeps the budget high," confided Douglas.

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YES, Sen. Douglas told the truth. Despite all the noisy fanfare about a "welfare state," we have none in this country today. But we do have a warfare state.

But Douglas did not speak the truth because he favors reducing the warfare budget or doing away with the warfare state. He was only trying to tell these tycoons that even if all welfare expenditures were to be eliminated, this would only mean a cut of 5 percent in the budget.

But with production moving downward (an over-all average of 15 percent in the past year), Big Business is fearful today that the estimated federal deficit of five to six billion dollars may lead to an increase in taxation. It is also desirous of maintaining its extremely high rate of profit by lowering wage and living standards for the mass of the people.

Thus, Big Business would like to put an end to all this talk about welfare and social security. It is fearful that the demagoguery of the Truman administration may boomerang—that the people who take it at its face value may sooner or later demand full payment on their promissory note.

The bankers and industrialists realize that with production declining and unemployment increasing, that there will be less to spend for welfare and yet a greater demand for welfare and security from the people.

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THAT IS WHY they believe a strong hand must be shown now. And this explains the Republican charge of "Statism," the Eisenhower's austerity speeches of the recent weeks and the talk about a formal coalition between the Republicans and the Dixiecrats.

The overwhelming majority of the working people, especially organized labor and the Negro people, see through the phony "Statism" cry of the Republicans.

But this common hatred of the silk-hat Republicans must not confuse us as to what is the real issue in America today. It is welfare versus warfare.

And on this central issue, the Truman Administration occupies essentially the same position as do the Republicans. The only difference is that Truman says we can have a welfare and a warfare state at the same time — which is, of course, a brazen falsehood. We can not have both together.

Already the American people have paid dearly for the warfare state. They have paid for it with rat-infested slums to live in, with over-crowded and poorly-equipped schools for their children, with inadequate old age and unemployment insurance and with few hospitals and no health protection. They are threatened with a far costlier bill in the future.

The time has come for Americans to decide—welfare or warfare? That is the issue for 1950.